

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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R 280111Z JUL 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

S E C R E T STATE 148979

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: MASS, LE, US

SUBJ: GOL REQUEST FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE: 1973 FMS

REF: (A) BEIRUT 6423, (B) BEIRUT 5968, (C) STATE 096750,
(D) BEIRUT 5687

1. WE WOULD APPRECIATE CLARIFICATION OF GOL INTENTIONS REGARDING UTILIZATION OF DOLLARS 10 MILLION FMS CREDIT FOR FY 73. DURING PAST TWO MONTHS GOL HAS CITED TWO REASONS WHY THIS CREDIT COULD NOT BE DRAWN UPON: FIRST WAS THAT USG WOULD HAVE TO PAY INCOME TAX ON INTEREST FROM LOAN. HAS THIS OBJECTION BEEN OVERCOME BY STATEMENT THAT USG IS NOT PREPARED TO PAY SUCH INTEREST AND SUGGESTION THAT LEBANESE FIND WAY TO PAY INTEREST THEMSELVES IF THIS A LEBANESE LEGAL REQUIREMENT (REF C)? SECOND, POTENTIALLY MORE SIGNIFICANT,
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IMPEDIMENT TO USE OF FMS IS THAT "THERE ARE NO UNOBLIGATED

FUNDS REMAINING FROM 200 MILLION LEBANESE POUNDS AUTHORIZED IN 1972 FOR FIVE YEAR PERIOD," I.E. GOL LACKS LEGAL BASIS FOR FURTHER BORROWING FOR DEFENSE EXPENDITURES (REF A).

2. HAS EMBASSY DETERMINED TO ITS SATISFACTION THAT THIS ENTIRE 200 MILLION LEBANESE POUND FUND HAS IN FACT BEEN OBLIGATED? IF NOT, HOW MUCH REMAINS TO BE SPENT?

3. STATUS OF FY 73 FMS IS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN BECAUSE WE ARE IN PROCESS OF PREPARING JUSTIFICATIONS FOR FUTURE FMS CREDITS TO LEBANON. AS EMBASSY AWARE, WE ARE REVIEWING THE DESIRABILITY OF ATTEMPTING TO HAVE ORIGINAL DOLLARS 5 MILLION PLANNED FOR FY 74 RAISED TO DOLLARS 15 MILLION. IF GOL IS NOT PREPARED, OR IS LEGALLY UNABLE TO UTILIZE 73 CREDITS, WE ASSUME SAME LOGIC WILL APPLY TO 74 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS, A FACTOR WHICH MAKES JUSTIFICATION DIFFICULT, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF PROBABLE SEVERE SHORTAGE OF FMS FUNDS IN FY 74.

4. IN ADDITION, WE NOTE THAT GOL HAS AT LEAST 7.5 MILLION AND POSSIBLY THE FULL DOLLARS 10 MILLION IN FMS REMAINING FROM FY 1972. THIS RESIDUE, IF COMBINED WITH DOLLARS 10 MILLION FY 73 CREDITS AND ANTICIPATED APPROPRIATION FOR FY 74 WOULD PROVIDE LEBANESE WITH APPROXIMATELY SUFFICIENT CREDIT TO PURCHASE ALL MILITARY EQUIPMENT - INCLUDING A-4C SKYHAWKS - WHICH WE HAVE OFFERED TO DELIVER WITHIN SIX MONTH PERIOD. ROGERS

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NNN

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